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**President Clinton Releases Report to Congress
on the Administration's Comprehensive Trade and
Development Policy Toward Africa**

President Clinton today forwarded to Congress the fourth in a series of five annual reports outlining the Administration's trade and development strategy toward sub-Saharan Africa. The 1998 report is the most comprehensive in the series of reports and provides a detailed overview of new U.S. government initiatives designed to support trade and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa.

"The Clinton Administration has made the goal of stronger economic ties with sub-Saharan Africa a clear economic and foreign policy priority," said United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky. "This report reflects significant progress in meeting key U.S.-Africa trade policy objectives. From expansion of our GSP program to spur development, to technical assistance and on-going negotiations specifically aimed at new trade and investment agreements, we will continue to press ahead with an ambitious agenda in the region."

The 1998 report is part of the President's *Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa* (Partnership Initiative) which was announced and adopted in June 1997. The Partnership Initiative embodies key policy objectives essential to stimulating economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa and facilitating Africa's integration into the global economy. Such objectives include support for economic reforms underway in the region, enhanced U.S. economic engagement with sub-Saharan Africa, support for Africa's full incorporation into the multilateral trading system, and support for sustainable economic development.

The Partnership Initiative includes provisions of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, bipartisan legislation introduced in the 105th Congress. "The Administration strongly supports enactment of this legislation, and looks forward to working with the 106th Congress to ensure its swift passage," Ambassador Barshefsky stated. "This bill represents an historic opportunity to promote a mutually beneficial and forward-looking trade policy with the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Enactment of this legislation will promote U.S. exports and investment and support African efforts toward increased economic development, further supporting the Administration's

policy in the region.”

The report highlights accomplishments as well as ongoing challenges and opportunities for the United States in the region. Significant progress was achieved in meeting key U.S. Africa trade policy objectives, including the appointment of an Assistant United States Trade Representative for Africa, the signing of a bilateral investment treaty with Mozambique, increased USAID funding to support economic reform in Africa, the establishment of workshops to assist African countries to participate more actively in the WTO, the expansion of U.S. Export-Import Bank activity in five West African Countries, the signing of new bilateral agreements between the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and nine African countries, and the use of the GSP program to encourage African regional economic integration.